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ABSTRACT

This report contains the results of a 1986 public opinion poll concerning public schools. This annual survey, using a modified probability sample of the United States population, posed questions on the following topics: (1) the most important problems with which schools must deal; (2) drug use in schools; (3) grading of schools and their teachers; (4) grading schools on various success characteristics; (5) goals of education; (6) Federal, State and local government influence on education; (7) financing schools and schooling; (8) attitudes about Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome and schooling; (9) grade promotion and high school graduation requirements; (10) national testing; (11) time spent on homework; (12) teachers: testing, salaries, shortages; (13) age at which children should begin school; (14) the right to choose children's schools; (15) attitudes toward private and parochial schools; and (16) support for a voucher system. Graphs, charts and other graphic displays accompany this report. Some statistics are broken down into groups which reflect the educational level of the respondents. The research methods are summarized and procedures are given for ordering the poll. (VM)

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THE 18th ANNUAL GALLUP POLL OF THE PUBLIC'S ATTITUDES TOWARD THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

ALEC M. GALLUP

UD 025 641

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THE 18TH ANNUAL GALLUP POLL OF THE PUBLIC'S ATTITUDES TOWARD THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

BY ALEC M. GALLUP

The annual Phi Delta Kappa/Gallup Poll of the Public's Attitudes Toward the Public Schools is a continuing source of reliable information concerning trends in opinion about significant school questions. For school officials, the poll is valuable in at least two ways: it alerts decision makers to overall public reaction to a variety of school programs and policies, and it serves as a national benchmark against which local attitudes can be measured.

Local officials are welcome to use questions asked in the PDK/Gallup surveys. The questions are not copyrighted. Moreover, no limits are placed on the use of information contained in these reports, beyond customary credit to the source and observance of the canons of accuracy and completeness of quotation.

Phi Delta Kappa's Dissemination Division, assisted by the Gallup Organization, is prepared to help school districts and other agencies survey local populations on education questions. For details about this service, write or telephone Neville Robertson, director of the Center for the Dissemination of Innovative Programs, Phi Delta Kappa, P. O. Box 789, Bloomington, IN 47402. The phone number is 812/339-1156.

Questions for this year's poll were solicited from the 50 chief state school officers of the U.S., some 30 of whom responded. After their suggestions were summarized, the following panel rated their value for the benefit of the Gallup staff: Harold Blackburn, Commissioner of Education, Kansas; Gus A. Crenson, Director, Public Information and Publications, State Department of Education, Maryland; Robert L. Brunelle, Commissioner of Education, New Hampshire; Herbert J. Grover, State Superintendent of Schools, Wisconsin; Bill Honig, Superintendent of Public Instruction, California; Charles McDaniel, State Superintendent of Public Instruction, Georgia; Alice McDonald, Superintendent of Public Instruction, Kentucky; Tom McNeal, State Superintendent of Schools, West Virginia; and Margaret A. Smith, Secretary of Education, Pennsylvania. Myron Lieberman, now Professor of Education at the University of Pennsylvania, also critiqued the question summary.

— Stanley M. Elam, Coordinator
Phi Delta Kappa Opinion Polls

Most Important Problems Facing Local Public Schools in 1986

For the first time in this survey's 18-year history, the U.S. public has identified drug use by students as the most important problem facing the public schools. More than half of our respondents mention either drugs (28%) or discipline (24%), which was rated most important in 16 of the 17 previous polls. (In 1971 "lack of proper financial support" was considered the most important problem.) Our best-educated respondents — those with college degrees — continue to perceive discipline rather than drugs as the schools' most important problem. The margin is substantial, 30% to 18%. Other differences in perception by population groups are shown in the second chart below.

The question:

What do you think are the biggest problems with which the public schools in this community must deal?

	National Totals %	No Children in School %	Public School Parents %	Nonpublic School Parents %
Use of drugs	28	28	27	22
Lack of discipline	24	24	23	26
Lack of proper financial support	11	9	15	14
Poor curriculum/poor standards	8	7	10	11
Difficulty in getting good teachers	6	6	6	5
Moral standards/dress code	5	5	5	11
Drinking/alcoholism	5	4	5	8
Large schools/ overcrowding	5	4	6	5
Teachers' lack of interest	4	4	6	7
Lack of respect for teachers/other students	4	4	4	3
Parents' lack of interest	4	3	5	4
Low teacher pay	3	2	4	3
Integration/busing	3	4	3	3
Crime/vandalism	3	3	3	1
Pupils' lack of interest/ truancy	3	3	2	1
Problems with administration	2	2	3	5
Fighting	2	2	2	*
Mismanagement of funds/programs	1	1	1	3
Communication problems	1	1	1	3
Lack of needed teachers	1	1	1	2
Lack of proper facilities	1	1	1	2
Transportation	1	1	2	1
Teacher strikes	1	1	1	1
Too many schools/ declining enrollment	1	1	1	*
Parents' involvement in school activities	1	1	1	*
There are no problems	2	2	4	3
Miscellaneous	6	6	4	6
Don't know	11	13	4	5

*Less than one-half of 1%.
(Figures add to more than 100% because of multiple answers.)

UD025641

Poll illustrations by Claudia Tantillo

	Differences in Problem Perception Among Population Groups	
	Use of Drugs %	Lack of Discipline %
NATIONAL TOTALS	**28**	**24**
Sex		
Men	27	24
Women	29	23
Race		
White	27	24
Nonwhite	32	21
Age		
18 - 29 years	27	12
30 - 49 years	26	29
50 and over	31	29
Community Size		
1 million and over	26	23
500,000 - 999,999	34	24
50,000 - 499,999	29	23
2,500 - 49,999	31	23
Under 2,500	26	25
Central city	27	24
Education		
College	23	24
Graduate	18	30
Incomplete	26	20
High school	31	24
Graduate	28	25
Incomplete	39	22
Grade school	34	19
Income		
$40,000 and over	30	27
$30,000 - $39,999	18	29
$20,000 - $29,999	25	29
$10,000 - $19,999	31	22
Under $10,000	33	19
Region		
East	29	29
Midwest	27	22
South	28	24
West	27	20

Parents Distinguish Between 'Local Schools' and Schools Their Children Attend

As reported in previous studies, parents tend to be more positive about their children's schools than about the local schools as a group. Thus parents may regard drugs and discipline as problems in the local public schools but not in the school their oldest child attends. The difference favoring a child's school is 16% versus 27% for drugs and 15% versus 23% for discipline.

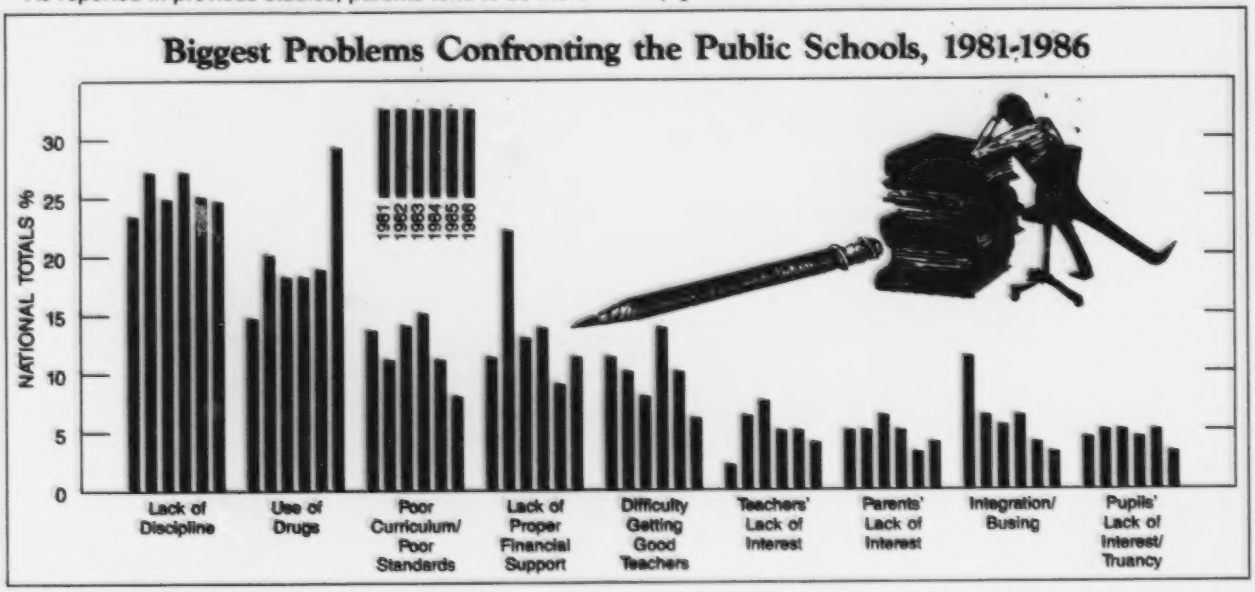
Drugs are perceived as a more serious problem by parents of high school children than by parents of elementary school children. Similarly, parents whose oldest children are either average or below average academically are somewhat more likely than other parents to see drugs as the most important problem facing the public schools.

The question:

What do you think are the biggest problems with which the school your oldest child attends must deal?

	School Own Child Attends %	Local Schools %
Use of drugs	16	27
Lack of discipline	15	23
Lack of proper financial support	9	15
Large schools/overcrowding	9	6
Poor curriculum/poor standards	7	10
Parents' lack of interest	4	5
Teachers' lack of interest	4	6
Moral standards/dress code	4	5
Difficulty in getting good teachers	3	6
Pupils' lack of interest/truancy	3	2
Drinking/alcoholism	3	5
Lack of needed teachers	3	1
Lack of respect for teachers/other students	3	4
Fighting	3	2
Parents' involvement in school activities	3	1
There are no problems	8	4
Miscellaneous	24	24
Don't know	12	4

(Figures add to more than 100% because of multiple answers.)



Support for Anti-Drug Measures In Local Schools

Survey respondents were asked to rate five measures for dealing with the drug problem in their local public schools. Nine in 10 support mandatory instruction in the dangers of drug abuse, roughly the same percentage who feel that education about the dangers of drug abuse should be a required course in the school curriculum (as reported in earlier studies). Eight in 10 favor the expulsion of students caught using drugs. Seven in 10 support using school funds to treat drug users, and the same proportion would permit school officials to search lockers when they suspect that drugs might be concealed in them. By a small majority (5-4), respondents even favor urinalysis to detect drug use.

Support for each measure is virtually the same for parents and nonparents of schoolchildren. However, young people (under 30), while they are more likely to favor use of school funds to treat drug users than are their elders, are substantially less likely to support two of the more stringent measures: locker searches and urinalysis. Nonwhites are somewhat more likely to favor locker searches and substantially more likely to favor urinalysis than are whites, but they are less likely to favor expulsion of drug users from school.

College-educated and upper-income respondents are somewhat more likely to favor use of school funds for treating drug users than are their less-educated and less financially well-off counterparts.

The question:

This card lists various ways to deal with the problem of drugs in the public schools. As I read off each one of these plans, would you tell me whether you would favor or oppose its use in the public schools in your community?

	National Totals %	No Children In School %	Public School Parents %	Nonpublic School Parents %
Requiring instruction for all students in the dangers of drug abuse.				
Favor	90	90	91	92
Oppose	6	6	6	5
Don't know	4	4	3	3
Permitting expulsion of students who are caught using drugs in school buildings or on school grounds.				
Favor	78	77	81	82
Oppose	16	16	14	17
Don't know	6	7	5	1
Use of school funds to provide counseling and treatment for students who use drugs.				
Favor	69	68	70	83
Oppose	25	26	24	16
Don't know	6	6	6	1
Permitting teachers or school authorities to search lockers or personal property if they suspect drugs, without obtaining a court-issued search warrant.				
Favor	67	67	67	77
Oppose	28	28	30	22
Don't know	5	5	3	1
Testing students for drug use by urinalysis.				
Favor	49	49	49	49
Oppose	44	44	43	46
Don't know	7	7	8	5

Grading the Public Schools And Their Teachers

The 1986 survey indicates that the public schools are perceived as favorably as in 1984 and 1985, when they achieved their highest performance grades since 1976. Forty-one percent of Americans rate the public schools locally (in "this community") as either A or B.

Similarly, 28% of the public give the public schools, *nationally*, either an A or B — the highest grade since this measurement was initiated in 1981.

Teachers receive an A or B from almost half of the public (48%), a figure statistically equivalent to last year's 49%, which represented the highest rating recorded since the measurement was initiated in 1981.

Administrators are graded A or B by about four in 10 members of the public (42%), a somewhat lower figure than last year's record 48% but higher than the low point of 36% recorded at the beginning of the Eighties.

Last year, for the first time, and again this year, public school parents were asked to grade the schools their oldest child attended, in addition to the local schools. This year's findings, like last year's, reveal the same phenomenon that arises in analyzing the grades awarded to the schools nationally, as compared to the schools locally — that is, the closer the contact, the more favorable the perception. Thus public school parents grade the public schools in their own community substantially higher than the public schools nationally, and they rate the public schools their own children attend even higher than the local schools. In the current survey, only 28% of parents give the public schools, nationally, an A or B; nearly twice as many (55%) give the local schools an A or B, and almost two-thirds (65%) give the schools their children attend one of the top two grades.

The question:

Students are often given the grades A,B,C,D, and FAIL to denote the quality of their work. Suppose the *public* schools themselves, in this community, were graded in the same way. What grade would you give the public schools here — A,B,C,D, or FAIL?

	1986 National Totals %	No Children In School %	Public School Parents %	Nonpublic School Parents %
A+B	41	36	55	40
A	11	8	18	11
B	30	28	37	29
C	28	27	29	29
D	11	11	11	16
FAIL	5	5	4	11
Don't know	15	21	1	4

	A+B %	A %	B %	C %	D %	FAIL %	Don't Know %
NATIONAL TOTALS	41	11	30	28	11	5	15
Sex							
Men	41	10	31	31	10	5	13
Women	42	12	30	26	12	4	16
Race							
White	42	11	31	28	10	5	15
Nonwhite	37	10	27	30	18	5	10
Age							
18 - 29 years	35	5	30	35	14	4	12
30 - 49 years	45	14	31	30	11	5	9
50 and over	42	12	30	20	9	6	23
Community Size							
1 million and over	38	10	28	27	14	6	15
500,000 - 999,999	36	6	30	30	13	4	17
50,000 - 499,999	39	8	31	27	12	4	18
2,500 - 49,999	46	12	34	32	8	5	9
Under 2,500	46	14	32	27	8	4	15
Central city	29	4	25	31	18	7	15
Education							
College	45	10	35	29	10	4	12
Graduate	51	12	39	28	7	4	10
Incomplete	40	9	31	30	12	5	13
High school	38	10	28	29	12	5	16
Graduate	39	12	27	29	13	4	15
Incomplete	35	5	30	30	10	7	18
Grade school	41	16	25	16	12	6	25
Income							
$40,000 and over	54	13	41	27	9	3	7
$30,000 - $39,999	39	13	26	34	12	3	12
$20,000 - $29,999	41	10	31	33	8	6	12
$10,000 - $19,999	40	9	31	25	14	4	17
Under $10,000	35	10	25	25	9	7	24
Region							
East	39	9	30	26	11	5	19
Midwest	42	11	31	29	11	4	14
South	45	12	33	28	11	5	11
West	37	10	27	30	12	5	16

National Ratings

The public's rating of the schools nationally has climbed steadily since the first measurement in 1981, from 20% A or B, recorded at that time, to the high point of 28% registered this year.

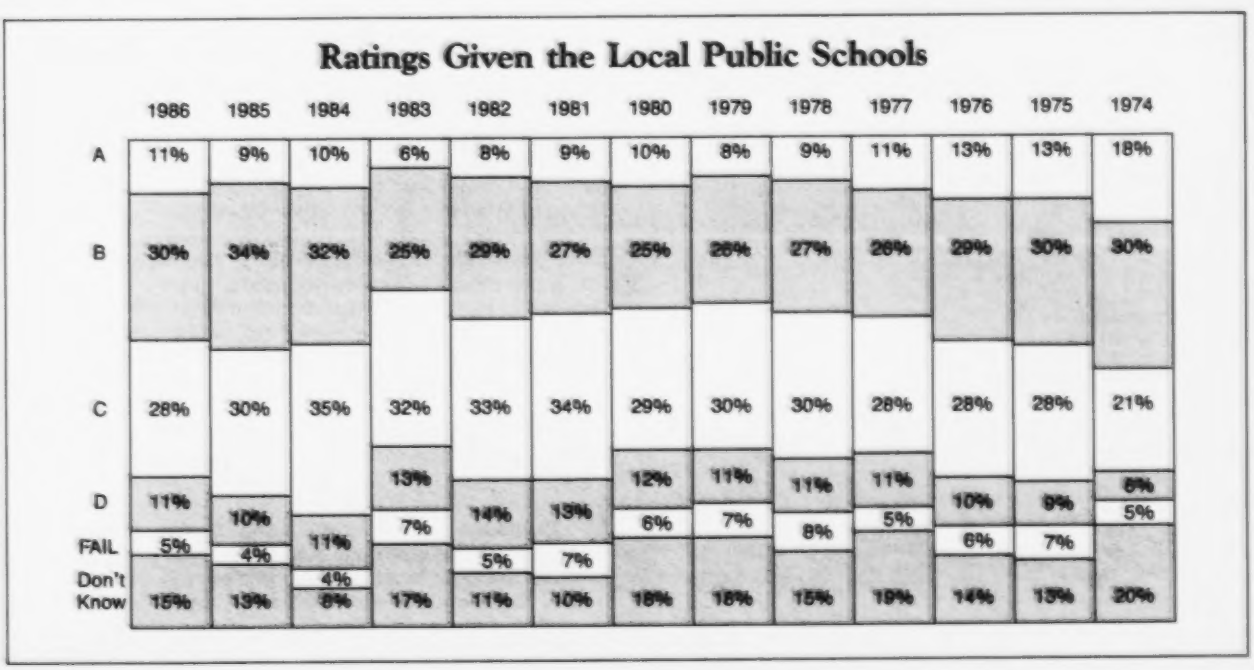
The question:

How about the public schools in the nation as a whole? What grade would you give the public schools nationally — A,B,C,D, or FAIL?

NATIONAL TOTALS	1986 %	1985 %	1984 %	1983 %	1982 %	1981 %
A+B	28	27	25	19	22	20
A	3	3	2	2	2	2
B	25	24	23	17	20	18
C	41	43	49	38	44	43
D	10	12	11	16	15	15
FAIL	5	3	4	6	4	6
Don't know	16	15	11	21	15	16

Grading School Oldest Child Attends

Almost two-thirds of parents (65%) give the school their oldest child attends an A or B. Only 26% give the school a



grade of C and 6% a D or Failing grade. If their child's academic performance is above average, almost three-quarters of parents (73%) grade their school A or B. Even among parents of average or below-average students, nearly six in 10 (59%) give their children's school one of the two top grades.

The question:

Using the A,B,C,D, FAIL scale again, what grade would you give the school your oldest child attends?

Public School Parents	A+B %	A %	B %	C %	D %	FAIL %	Don't Know %
TOTAL	65	28	37	26	4	2	3

Respondents were asked to rate teachers and administrators on the same A-F scale as the schools. These ratings correspond roughly with school ratings. The summary table below provides overall percentages.*

	How Americans Grade Public School Education A+B		
	Public School Parents %	U.S. Public %	No Children In School %
Public Schools			
Nationally	28	28	28
Locally (all schools in community)	55	41	36
That oldest child attends	65	–	–
Where child receives above-average grades	73	–	–
Public School Teachers			
In local schools	60	48	43
In school oldest child attends	65	–	–
Where child receives above-average grades	77	–	–
Public School Principals and Administrators			
In local schools	56	42	38
In school oldest child attends	63	–	–
Where child receives above-average grades	70	–	–

*To secure the complete Gallup report for 1986, see directions on page 16.

Rating the Schools on Success Characteristics

Good schools should have the following characteristics, according to a consensus of educational researchers.

A. The school's environment should be safe and orderly.

B. The school's principal should spend most of his or her time helping teachers improve their teaching.

C. School administrators and teachers should have high expectations of students and demand high achievement.

D. General agreement should exist among administrators, teachers, and parents about school goals.

E. Student progress toward school goals should be regularly measured and reported.

Public school parents were asked to judge how accurately each of the above statements describes the school their oldest child attends: very accurately, fairly accurately, not very accurately, or not at all accurately. The findings are encouraging to educators. About eight in 10 parents believe statements A and E apply very accurately or fairly accurately. About seven in 10 believe the same about statements C and D. About half believe statement B applies very accurately or fairly accurately.

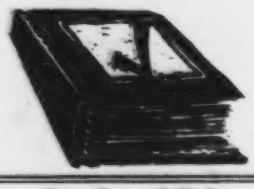
Ironically, though many public school parents perceive drugs and discipline as major problems in the schools their children attend, the vast majority (85%) feel that these schools are either "very" or "fairly" safe and orderly.

The question:

This card lists some of the characteristics of good schools. As I read off each item by letter, would you tell me how accurately you feel it describes the school your oldest child attends — very accurately, fairly accurately, not very accurately, or not at all accurately?

	Combined Very Accurately/ Fairly Accurately %	Very Accurately %	Fairly Accurately %	Not Very Accurately %	Not at All Accurately %	Don't Know %
A. Safe, orderly school environment	84	40	44	10	2	4
E. Student progress measured, reported	80	41	39	9	5	6
C. Staff has high expectations, demands achievement	74	33	41	16	3	7
D. Staff, parents agree on school goals	70	31	39	14	6	10
B. Principal helps teachers	54	17	37	18	8	20

Analysis of the "very accurate" responses among various groups in the parent population generally reveals very little difference, but there were some exceptions. Parents whose children are above average academically are somewhat more likely to state that each of these statements very accurately describes their school than do those parents whose children are average or below average. Parents whose oldest child is in elementary school are substantially more likely to say that the school is safe and orderly than are those whose oldest child is in high school.



The Goals of Education

Asked what they consider the chief reasons why people want their children to get an education, Americans tend to mention job- and finance-related reasons first. For example, about one-third (34%) cite job opportunities, 8% say to get a better-paying job, 4% say to obtain specialized training, and 9% say to achieve financial security.

Relatively few Americans mention preparation for life (23%), to acquire knowledge (10%), to become a better citizen (6%), to learn how to get along with others (4%), or to contribute to society (3%).

Furthermore, nonparents respond in virtually the same way as parents with children in the public schools.

The question:

People have different reasons why they want their children to get an education. What are the chief reasons that come to your mind?

	National Totals %	No Children In School %	Public School Parents %	Nonpublic School Parents %
Job opportunities/ better job	34	35	33	18
Preparation for life/ better life	23	22	25	33
Education is a necessity of life	12	12	12	10
More knowledge	10	10	10	11
Financial security/economic stability	9	8	11	13
To get a better-paying job	8	9	5	2
To become better citizens	6	6	6	5
For a successful life	5	4	7	6
To learn how to get along with people	4	4	3	1
For better/easier life than parents	4	2	7	3
Specialized training profession	4	3	4	9
Teaches person to think/learn/understand	3	3	3	8
To contribute to society	3	3	4	4
Personal development/ self-realization	3	3	4	3
To become self-sufficient (independence)	3	3	4	3
To learn basic skills/ fundamental learning skills	3	3	3	1
To develop the ability to deal with adult responsibilities	2	2	3	5
For happy/happier life	2	2	2	5
Creates opportunities/ opens doors	2	2	2	2
To develop an understanding and appreciation for culture	1	2	1	2
Helps keep children out of trouble	1	1	1	3
Social status	1	1	1	2
To develop self-discipline	1	1	1	1
To develop basic individual values	1	*	1	1
To develop critical thinking skills	1	1	*	1
Miscellaneous	2	2	1	3
Don't know	4	5	3	3

*Less than one-half of 1%.
(Figures add to more than 100% because of multiple answers.)

Attitudes Toward Federal, State, Local Influence on Public Education

This survey reveals that there is substantial support (57% to 17%) for more influence on public schools from local school boards, moderate support (45% to 32%) for more influence on the part of the state governments, and strong opposition to more federal influence on the way the public schools are run. The current 2-1 opposition to more federal influence (53% to 26%) is virtually the same as that recorded when the question was last asked in 1982, after the Reagan Administration took office.

Parents and nonparents have similar attitudes on these matters. Parents, however, are even more likely than nonparents to oppose increased federal influence. At the same time, they are somewhat more likely than nonparents to favor both increased influence by local school boards and by the state government.

Various population groups rather consistently support increased influence for local school boards, but some differences emerge on the question of increased control by state and federal government. Younger people and nonwhites are more likely than others to favor it. On the other hand, better-educated and higher-income segments of the population are more likely to favor less influence on the part of either the state governments or the federal government than are their less well-educated and less well-off counterparts.

The question on federal influence:

Thinking about the future, would you like the federal government in Washington to have more influence, or less influence, in determining the educational program of the local public schools?

NATIONAL TOTALS	1986 %	1982 %
More influence	26	28
Less influence	53	54
Same as now	12	10
Don't know	9	8

The question on state influence:

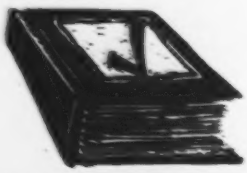
How about the state government? Would you like the state government to have more influence, or less influence, in determining the educational program of the local public schools?

	National Totals %	No Children in School %	Public School Parents %	Nonpublic School Parents %
More influence	45	46	45	35
Less influence	32	29	38	38
Same as now	16	16	13	20
Don't know	7	9	4	7

The question on local influence:

How about the local school board? Would you like the local school board to have more influence, or less influence, in determining the educational program of the local public schools?

	National Totals %	No Children in School %	Public School Parents %	Nonpublic School Parents %
More influence	57	56	61	55
Less influence	17	17	15	19
Same as now	17	16	19	19
Don't know	9	11	5	7



Financing the Public Schools

This survey reveals that 33% of Americans feel that the best way to finance the public schools is by means of state taxes. However, almost as many prefer federal taxes or local property taxes (24% in both instances).

It is instructive to relate what the public feels is the best source of funding for education — federal, state, or local taxes — to its views on which of the three divisions of government should have more influence on education policy. While the public disapproves of increased influence on the part of the federal government by a substantial margin, it is by no means opposed to accepting federal tax money.

The mild public preference for state taxes supports the revolution in school funding that began in the Seventies. Today, state sources generally yield more money for public schools than do local taxing units, though there are great variations among the states.

Despite the public's professed desire for better schools, resistance to increased local taxes for improving public education persists; only about one-third (37%) of Americans would be willing to pay more taxes should local school authorities say they are needed. This is roughly the same percentage as reported in these surveys over the past 15 years.

Resistance to increased taxes also surfaces when Americans are asked specifically whether they would favor or oppose increased property taxes or federal income taxes to improve public education. Only one-third would be willing to pay more property taxes, and only one-fourth would increase income taxes. In fact, as answers to our last finance question show, the only support for increases comes for taxes on alcohol and cigarettes and an increased percentage of the take from state lotteries, now held in 23 states.

The question on preferred ways of financing schools:

There is always a lot of discussion about the best way to finance the public schools. Which do you think is the best way to finance the public schools: by means of local property taxes, by state taxes, or by taxes from the federal government in Washington?

	National Totals %	No Children in School %	Public School Parents %	Nonpublic School Parents %
Local property taxes	24	22	28	22
State taxes	33	34	32	36
Taxes from federal government	24	23	26	22
Don't know	19	21	12	20

The questions on knowledge of actual sources of public school support:

Now, where do you think most of the funds to finance the public schools come from: from local property taxes, from state taxes, or from the federal government in Washington? And what do you think is the second largest source?

	National Totals %		No Children in School %		Public School Parents %		Nonpublic School Parents %	
	Largest source	Second largest source	Largest source	Second largest source	Largest source	Second largest source	Largest source	Second largest source
Local property taxes	45	19	44	19	44	19	46	23
State taxes	30	42	30	43	31	39	36	34
Taxes from federal government	11	22	10	20	14	26	4	19
Don't know	14	17	16	18	11	16	14	24

The question on voting to raise taxes for school support:

Suppose the local public schools said they needed much more money. As you feel at this time, would you vote to raise taxes for this purpose, or would you vote against raising taxes for this purpose?

	National Totals %	No Children In School %	Public School Parents %	Nonpublic School Parents %
For raise in taxes	37	34	45	38
Against raise in taxes	52	54	46	51
No opinion	11	12	9	11

Financial Support of the Public Schools

	Favor Raising Taxes %	Opposed to Raising Taxes %	Don't Know %
1986 survey	37	52	11
1985 survey	38	52	10
1984 survey	41	47	12
1983 survey	39	52	9
1981 survey	30	60	10
1972 survey	36	56	8
1971 survey	40	52	8
1970 survey	37	56	7
1969 survey	45	49	6

The question on preferred type of tax for school support:

Many states have recently passed school improvement legislation that requires additional financial expenditures. If your state needed to raise more money for the public schools, would you vote for or against the following proposals?

	National Totals %	No Children In School %	Public School Parents %	Nonpublic School Parents %
Increased alcoholic beverage taxes?				
Favor	79	78	82	79
Oppose	18	18	17	20
Don't know	3	4	1	1
Increasing the percentage of state lottery money that goes to support public schools in those states with a state lottery?				
Favor	78	77	81	69
Oppose	10	9	12	22
Don't know	12	14	7	9
Increased cigarette and tobacco taxes?				
Favor	74	74	74	79
Oppose	22	21	25	20
Don't know	4	5	1	1
Increased local property taxes?				
Favor	33	31	39	31
Oppose	60	61	56	63
Don't know	7	8	5	6
Increased gasoline taxes?				
Favor	28	28	29	29
Oppose	67	67	68	70
Don't know	5	5	3	1
Increased income taxes?				
Favor	27	25	31	26
Oppose	66	67	65	68
Don't know	7	8	4	6

Attitudes About AIDS

Two-thirds of the public would permit their children to attend school with a student who has AIDS. Perhaps surprisingly, the latest Gallup survey not only found an extraordinarily high level of public awareness of the disease (98%) but a very small proportion (6%) of the public who mistakenly believe that a person can contract AIDS merely by being in a public place with someone who has it.

The findings for this question only are based on telephone interviews with 1,004 adults, age 18 and older, conducted in scientifically selected localities across the U.S. during the period of 7-10 March 1986.

Only one-sixth (17%) of those who would *not* allow their children to attend classes with an AIDS victim believe that the disease can be transmitted by casual social contact, while 59% of this group voice the opposite opinion and 24% are undecided.

Although substantial majorities in all key population groups believe correctly that AIDS cannot be contracted by casual contact, this feeling is somewhat less prevalent — and uncertainty is more prevalent — among older, less-well-educated, and less-affluent people. Similarly, persons from these groups (which are highly interrelated) are less likely than their counterparts to say that they would permit their children to attend classes with a child who has AIDS.

This question was asked first: "Have you heard or read about the disease called AIDS — Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome?" Those who answered yes — an overwhelming 98% of the public — were then asked the following questions.

The first question:

Do you believe a person can get AIDS by being in a crowded place with someone who has it?

	Casual Transmission of AIDS (Based on aware group)		
	Can Be Transmitted %	Cannot Be %	Not Sure %
NATIONAL TOTALS	6	81	13
Sex			
Men	7	79	14
Women	4	83	13
Race			
White	5	82	13
Nonwhite	10	79	11
Age			
18 - 29 years	8	86	6
30 - 49 years	5	86	9
50 and over	5	73	22
Education			
College graduates	2	91	7
College incomplete	5	87	8
High school graduates	5	82	13
High school incomplete	11	62	27
Region			
East	3	86	11
Midwest	6	81	13
South	6	77	17
West	6	83	11

The second question:

A 14-year-old Indiana boy who contracted AIDS through a contaminated blood transfusion was banned from attending school classes. After a county medical officer ruled that he posed no health threat to his classmates, he went back to school, but the parents of almost half of the students at his school kept their children home.

If you had children of this age, would you permit them to attend classes with a child who had AIDS, or not?

	Permit Child to Attend School With AIDS Victim? (Based on aware group)		
	Yes %	No %	Not Sure %
NATIONAL TOTALS	67	24	9
Sex			
Men	66	27	7
Women	67	22	11
Race			
White	67	24	9
Nonwhite	64	27	9
Age			
18 - 29 years	64	29	7
30 - 49 years	69	23	8
50 and over	65	23	12
Education			
College graduates	72	19	9
College incomplete	68	23	9
High school graduates	68	23	9
High school incomplete	57	35	8
Region			
East	64	27	9
Midwest	69	20	11
South	63	27	10
West	72	22	6

Support for Stricter Grade Promotion/ High School Graduation Requirements

To ascertain how the public feels about toughening requirements for grade promotion and for high school graduation, as has been recommended in national education reports, respondents were asked a series of questions. Those who supported stricter graduation requirements were asked whether they would do so if it meant that substantially fewer students would graduate. Finally, respondents were asked which of three proposals they preferred for dealing with those students who could not meet graduation requirements.

The survey reveals that Americans strongly favor stricter requirements for both grade promotion and high school graduation, and by virtually identical margins: 72% to 6% and 70% to 5%. These findings correspond closely with the public's support for testing to determine both grade promotion and high school graduation, as revealed in earlier surveys in this series.

The first question:

In your opinion, should promotion from grade to grade in the public schools be made more strict than it is now or less strict?

	National Totals %	No Children In School %	Public School Parents %	Nonpublic School Parents %
More strict	72	72	70	73
Less strict	6	5	7	6
Same as now	16	15	20	16
Don't know	6	8	3	5

The second question:

In your opinion, should the requirements for graduation from the public high schools be made more strict than they are now or less strict?

	National Totals %	No Children In School %	Public School Parents %	Nonpublic School Parents %
More strict	70	71	68	75
Less strict	5	5	7	*
Same as now	19	17	23	20
Don't know	6	7	2	5

*Less than one-half of 1%.

The third question:

Would you favor stricter requirements for high school graduation even if it meant that significantly fewer students would graduate than is now the case?

"Ideologically, I guess you could say I'm a hypocrite."

	National Totals %	No Children In School %	Public School Parents %	Nonpublic School Parents %
Yes	68	68	68	77
No	23	22	26	18
Don't know	9	10	6	5

Groups most in favor of stricter standards for graduation are the college-educated, those in the highest-income households (i.e., $30,000 or over), and residents of the nation's largest cities (i.e., 1 million or more).

Among groups in the parent population, it is the college-educated and those whose children are above average academically who are most supportive of stricter requirements.

The final question in this series:

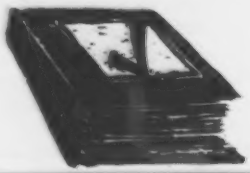
This card lists several ways to deal with those students who do not meet the requirements for public high school graduation. Which one of these plans would you prefer?

	National Totals %	No Children In School %	Public School Parents %	Nonpublic School Parents %
Have the high schools set up a remedial program for helping students who initially failed to meet the requirements for high school graduation to satisfy these requirements. This program would be supported by taxes.	45	44	45	53
Have high schools set up a remedial program for helping those students who initially failed to meet the requirements for high school graduation to satisfy these requirements. Students would be charged tuition to enter this program.	27	27	30	23
Have the high schools award more than one kind of diploma so that if a student cannot meet the requirements for a standard diploma, he or she would still be awarded a lesser diploma.	19	19	19	16
Don't know	9	10	6	8

Two of the proposals above involve remedial programs to help failing students to meet graduation requirements: one supported by taxes and the other paid for by student tuition. The third proposal calls for awarding a different diploma to those who do not meet the requirements of the standard diploma.

Note that almost three-quarters of Americans (72%) would opt for one of the two remedial programs. Support for the free, tax-supported proposal is preferred by a margin of almost 2-1 (45% to 27%) over the tuition proposal. Only one in five, however (19%), would choose proposal three, which would award a lesser degree to those who could not meet the requirements for the standard degree.

Attitudes toward the three proposals are virtually the same among parents of public school children and nonparents, as well as among the various groups in the total national population.



Support for National Testing

Not only have Americans consistently favored mandatory testing for grade promotion and high school graduation, but they continue overwhelmingly to support the concept of national tests to permit comparisons of the performance of students in various communities.

In the current survey almost eight in 10 members of the public favor the concept of national testing, roughly the same level of support found in three previous surveys, conducted over a 15-year period. Interestingly, parents are just as likely to favor national testing of student performance as are nonparents.

Support for national testing approaches eight in 10 in virtually every population segment of the national population, with the single exception of those persons in households with annual incomes of less than $10,000, where the percentage in favor of testing falls below seven in 10 (67%).

The question:

Would you like to see the students in the local schools given national tests so that their educational achievement could be compared with students in other communities?

	National Totals %	No Children In School %	Public School Parents %	Nonpublic School Parents %
Yes	77	76	78	82
No	16	15	19	17
Don't know	7	9	3	1

	NATIONAL TOTALS			
	1986 %	1983 %	1971 %	1970 %
Yes	77	75	70	75
No	16	17	21	16
No opinion	7	8	9	9

Time Spent Helping on Homework

Survey respondents were asked to indicate about how many hours (if any) they spent helping their oldest child with his or her homework per week during the school year. Responses reveal some inconsistencies between professed attitudes and actual behavior.

For two decades, the public has held the belief that children, in elementary school and in high school, do not work hard enough. They have felt that schoolchildren — particularly high school students — should be given *more* home-

work. Moreover, the great majority of parents say they require their children to spend time on homework on school nights.

On the other hand, judging by the number of hours that parents claim to help their children with homework during an average school week, parents seem less helpful than they might be. Fully one-third of parents say they do not spend *any* time assisting their children with homework and on average spend only about 1½ hours per *week*. This compares somewhat unfavorably with the 1½ hours per *day* they require their children to spend on homework.

The question:

During the school year, on average, about how many hours a week do you help your oldest child with his or her homework?

	Public School Parents %
None	34
Up to 1 hour	13
1 - 1:59 hours	17
2 - 2:59 hours	10
3 - 3:59 hours	7
4 - 4:59 hours	5
5 - 5:59 hours	4
6 hours or more	5
Undesignated	5

Teachers: Testing, Salaries, Shortages

Pressing issues involving teachers were investigated in the current survey: the public's attitudes toward teacher competency tests, attitudes toward teacher salary levels, and views on strategies for attracting teachers in shortage areas such as math, science, and technical and vocational subjects.

As shown in three previous education surveys, there is overwhelming, across-the-board support for teacher competency testing. In the current survey, more than eight Americans in 10 favor such tests (85%), almost the identical percentage supporting the idea in 1979.

Interestingly, the level of support for competency tests is virtually the same as that for tests to prove teachers' knowledge *before* they are awarded a teaching certificate, as reported in the annual education surveys in 1979 and again in 1981.

The public still feels that teacher salaries are too low, an attitude revealed on numerous past surveys. In the current survey, 49% of the respondents favor a teacher salary figure higher than the salary they think teachers actually receive. In contrast, only 14% feel that teachers should receive *less* than they are thought to make. Specifically, the public thinks that beginning teachers, on average, receive $16,500 (which is close to the actual national average), but think they deserve to make almost $5,000 more, or $21,000.

On the subject of more pay for teachers in such shortage areas as math and science, the public continues to be roughly divided on the idea, 48% for to 44% against. This virtually matches the proportion of support found in 1984 but shows some decline in approval since a 1981 survey. There is strong support (83%) in favor of increasing the number of college scholarships for those who agree to become teachers in shortage areas. Only two in 10 respondents, however, favor relaxing teacher education and certification standards as a means of attracting teachers in these areas.

The teacher competency testing question:

In your opinion, should experienced teachers be periodically required to pass a statewide basic competency test in their subject area or areas or not?

	National Totals %	No Children In School %	Public School Parents %	Nonpublic School Parents %
Yes, they should	85	84	87	87
No	11	11	11	13
Don't know	4	5	2	*

*Less than one-half of 1%.

The questions on teacher salaries:

This card lists various income categories. What do you think the annual salary should be for a beginning public school teacher in this community with a bachelor's degree and teaching certificate?

Now, what do you think the salary actually is in this community for a beginning teacher with a bachelor's degree and teaching certificate?

Salary Categories	What People Think Beginning Teachers Should Be Paid %	What People Think Beginning Teachers Are Actually Paid %
Less than $10,000	3	3
$10,000 - $11,999	4	7
$12,000 - $13,999	6	12
$14,000 - $15,999	13	15
$16,000 - $17,999	12	18
$18,000 - $19,999	16	11
$20,000 - $24,999	19	6
$25,000 - $29,999	8	3
$30,000 and over	6	2
Don't know	13	25
Average salary deserved: $21,300		
Median salary deserved: $19,500		

The chart below treats these data in another way:

	National Totals %	No Children In School %	Public School Parents %	Nonpublic School Parents %
Deserve higher salary than perceived as being paid	49	47	55	56
Deserve lower salary than perceived as being paid	14	14	15	8
Deserve same salary as perceived	10	9	10	13
Don't know	27	30	20	23

Population groups most likely to feel that teachers are underpaid are college graduates, those in the highest income category, younger people, and those living in the center cities. For example, among persons in the over-$40,000 annual income category, 69% feel that teachers are underpaid compared to only 9% who say the opposite. Comparable figures for college graduates are 67% to 7%; for persons under 30, 58% to 16%; and for those living in the center cities, 57% to 14%.

There is one important regional difference: 44% of Western respondents think beginning teachers should be paid $20,000 or more. The comparable figure for the East is 29%, for the Midwest 31%, and for the South 31%.

The first question on teacher shortages:

Today there is a shortage of teachers in science, math, technical subjects, and vocational subjects. If your local schools needed teachers in these subjects, would you favor or oppose paying them higher wages than teachers of other subjects?

	National Totals %	No Children In School %	Public School Parents %	Nonpublic School Parents %
Favor	48	48	48	54
Oppose	44	43	47	43
Don't know	8	9	5	3

NATIONAL TOTALS

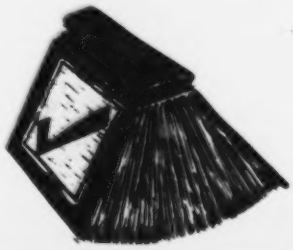
	1986 %	1984 %	1981 %
Favor	48	48	50
Oppose	44	43	35
No opinion	8	9	15

The question on strategies for relieving shortages:

If your local schools needed teachers in science, math, technical subjects, and vocational subjects, would you favor or oppose these proposals?

	National Totals %	No Children In School %	Public School Parents %	Nonpublic School Parents %
Increasing the number of scholarships to college students who agree to enter teacher training programs in these subjects?				
Favor	83	81	88	86
Oppose	11	11	9	11
Don't know	6	8	3	*
Relaxing teacher education and certification plans so more people could qualify to teach these subjects?				
Favor	18	18	19	31
Oppose	74	73	77	67
Don't know	8	9	4	2

*Less than one-half of 1%.



When Should Children Begin School?

To find out what Americans consider the right age for children to start attending publicly supported schools, respondents to the 1986 survey were asked two sets of questions. The first set asked at which class level children should begin school, and since this would depend directly on the age of the child, the second set investigated the public's views on the appropriate starting age.

Specifically, respondents were asked whether tax-supported kindergarten should be made available to all parents who want it for their children. Then they were asked whether kindergarten should be made compulsory. The age questions sought to determine whether the public would favor or oppose starting school at age 4, a year earlier than is traditional, and, if this idea was rejected, what the public felt was the *right* age for children to begin school.

The findings reveal overwhelming support for making kindergarten available as a regular part of the public school system; eight in 10 respondents favor doing so. Almost as large a proportion (seven in 10) favor compulsory kindergarten.

On the other hand, the public opposes, by more than 2-1 (64% to 29%), having children start school at age 4. This finding reveals no attitude change since the early Seventies, when the same question was asked.

An important exception to the negative response to starting school at age 4 appears among nonwhites, however. A majority of nonwhites (55%) favor starting public school children at age 4; only about one-third (35%) oppose the idea.

The first question:

A proposal has been made to make kindergarten available for all those who wish it as part of the public school system. The program would be supported by taxes. Would you favor or oppose such a program in your school district?

	National Totals %	No Children In School %	Public School Parents %	Nonpublic School Parents %
Favor	80	77	86	78
Oppose	13	14	10	12
Don't know	7	9	4	10

The second question:

Some educators have proposed that kindergarten be made compulsory for all children before entering first grade. Would you favor or oppose such a program in your school district?

	National Totals %	No Children in School %	Public School Parents %	Nonpublic School Parents %
Favor	71	68	80	80
Oppose	22	24	16	17
Don't know	7	8	4	3

The third question:

Some educators have proposed that young children start school a year earlier, at the age of 4. Does this sound like a good idea or not?

	National Totals %	No Children in School %	Public School Parents %	Nonpublic School Parents %
Yes, good idea	29	29	27	28
No	64	62	70	67
Don't know	7	9	3	4

	NATIONAL TOTALS		
	1986 %	1973 %	1972 %
Yes, good idea	29	30	30
No	64	64	64
Don't know	7	6	6

The final question:

At what age do you think children should start school?

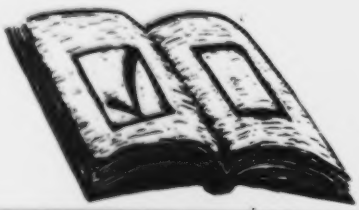
	National Totals %	No Children in School %	Public School Parents %	Nonpublic School Parents %
4 years (or under)	29	29	27	29
5 years	41	40	44	42
6 years	18	18	20	23
7 years (or over)	2	1	2	*
No opinion	10	12	7	6

*Less than one-half of 1%.

The findings concerning what the public feels is the class level at which public school children should start school, cross-tabulated with the age at which they should begin, shows the following distribution of preferences:

	%
(Compulsory) Kindergarten at 5	34
(Compulsory) Kindergarten at 4	23
(Compulsory) Kindergarten at 6	10
(Compulsory) First grade at 6*	9
(Compulsory) First grade at 5	6
(Compulsory) First grade at 4	4
No opinion	14

*Most common arrangement.



The Right to Choose Children's School

Although two out of three parents (68%) would like to have the right to choose the local schools their children attend, relatively few — one in four — would take advantage of this right if it were available.

Interestingly, the percentage who would select a different school for their children (24%) corresponds roughly with the percentage of parents who rate their children's schools as either average or below average in performance (32%). Groups most in favor of the right to choose are women, parents of elementary school children, and those whose children are average or below average in academic standing.

The first question:

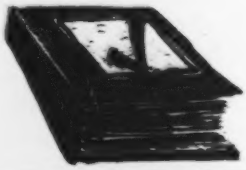
Do you wish you had the right to choose which public schools your children attend in this community?

Public School Parents	Yes %	No %	Don't Know %
TOTAL	68	25	7
Sex			
Men	62	33	5
Women	73	18	9
Education			
College	69	23	8
High school	67	28	5
Occupation			
White collar	64	27	9
Blue collar	69	25	6
Oldest Child Attends			
High school	65	28	7
Elementary school	72	23	5
Oldest Child's Class Standing			
Above average	66	29	5
Average or below	72	21	7

The second question:

If you could choose your children's schools among any of the public schools in this community, would you choose the ones they now attend or different ones?

Public School Parents	Same As Now %	Different Ones %	Don't Know %
TOTAL	65	24	11
Sex			
Men	76	14	10
Women	56	32	12
Education			
College	65	24	11
High school	68	23	9
Occupation			
White collar	63	26	11
Blue collar	70	22	8
Oldest Child Attends			
High school	62	28	10
Elementary school	70	21	9
Oldest Child's Class Standing			
Above average	72	20	8
Average or below	60	30	10



Private and Parochial Schools

American attitudes toward the nation's nonpublic schools — i.e., both the parochial and the independent or private schools — were investigated in the 1986 survey in the following areas:

- the public's support of or opposition to the use of government tax funds to help the nation's parochial schools — and correspondingly to assist the private or independent schools;
- public support of or opposition to the adoption of the voucher system in this country;
- parents' interest in sending their children to private or parochial schools, if they had the necessary means; and
- parents' acceptance or rejection of a specific voucher proposal that would provide $600 a year to enroll their children in any private, parochial, or public school.

Survey findings reveal that the public is opposed to providing tax money to parochial schools at about the same level as in 1961 and even more than when the question was first asked in 1971. The public is even more negative about giving tax money to support private or independent schools. Only about one-quarter (27%) feel that the government should provide funds for the nation's private schools.

Analysis of responses to both questions in the current survey shows the following distribution:

	%
Favor tax money for *both* parochial and private schools	24
Favor tax money for parochial schools only	18
Favor tax money for private schools only	3
Favor tax money for *neither* parochial nor private schools	55
Don't know	2

Americans' support for the general concept of vouchers is roughly divided, pro and con, as has been the case on the several occasions that the issue has been investigated in this series. Public school parents are roughly divided (49% to 46%) about the desirability of sending their children to a private or parochial school, assuming they had the means to do so.

Response to the specific $600 voucher proposal is generally negative. Only one-quarter of parents (27%) would use the $600 voucher for a parochial or private school; i.e., about half of those say they would like to send their children to a nonpublic school. Although 6% say they would move their children from their current public school to another school, it would be a public institution. More than six in 10 (61%), however, would keep their children in the public school they now attend.

Support for Tax Assistance for Parochial Schools

About four in 10 respondents (42%) support the idea of giving tax money to parochial schools, compared to five in 10 who oppose it. This is about the same division that was reported in the 1981 survey.

The current findings reveal somewhat more opposition than when the question was first asked, in 1970, however. At that time the public *supported* use of tax funds for parochial schools by a slim 48% to 44% margin. Parents of public school children are even more opposed to the idea of giving tax money to parochial schools than are nonparents.

This opposition is shared by most major population groups; the only exception is people living in the East, the region with a heavy concentration of Catholics. In the East, a majority (55%) favors giving tax money to parochial schools, compared to the 35% who oppose the idea.

The question:

It has been proposed that some government tax money be used to help parochial (church-related) schools make ends meet. How do you feel about this? Do you favor or oppose giving some government tax money to help parochial schools?

	National Totals %	No Children In School %	Public School Parents %	Nonpublic School Parents %
Favor	42	42	40	57
Oppose	50	48	54	41
No opinion	8	10	6	2

	NATIONAL TOTALS		
	1986 %	1981 %	1970 %
Favor	42	40	48
Oppose	50	51	44
No opinion	8	9	8

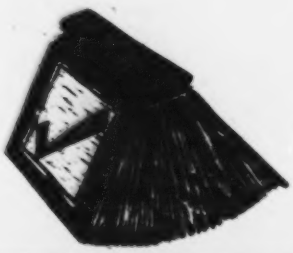
Support for Tax Assistance to Private Schools

Two out of three Americans (65%) are opposed to giving tax money to the nation's private schools, and this proportion holds among parents of public school children as well as nonparents. This strong opposition permeates every segment of the population, including people living in the East, with its relatively high concentration of Catholics.

The question:

How do you feel about private schools? Do you favor or oppose giving some government tax money to help *private schools*?

	National Totals %	No Children In School %	Public School Parents %	Nonpublic School Parents %
Favor	27	26	26	48
Oppose	65	66	67	50
No opinion	8	8	7	2



Interest in Sending Children To Private and Parochial Schools

Survey findings show the public to be divided — 49% for, 46% against — on the desirability of sending their children to a private or parochial school, even if they had the means. This split is characteristic of every major population group, with one exception. Women are much more likely (57% to 38%) to say they would send their children to a *parochial* school than men (39% to 56%).

A $600 voucher would persuade only about half of those parents interested in sending their children to a private or parochial school to do so. The $600 voucher would also have very little influence on parents sending a child to another *public* school: only 6% would move their children out of the schools they are currently attending to another public school.

The question:

If you had the means, would you send any of your children to a private or church-related school?

Public School Parents	Yes %	No %	Don't Know %
TOTAL	49	46	5
Sex			
Men	39	56	5
Women	57	38	5
Education			
College	47	47	6
High school	50	47	3
Occupation			
White collar	44	50	6
Blue collar	48	48	3
Oldest Child Attends			
High school	47	51	2
Elementary school	52	44	4
Oldest Child's Class Standing			
Above average	48	48	4
Average or below	51	46	3

Support for Vouchers

The same question about vouchers has been asked in this survey six times, beginning in 1970. Americans today support the voucher idea by a close 46% to 41% margin. This is a slight decline from its high point of approval in 1983, when the plan was favored by 51% of the public, while 38% opposed it.

Surprisingly, parents of public school children are only slightly more likely to favor the voucher system than are non-parents.

Although the public, collectively, approves of the voucher system by a narrow margin, majority support for its adoption emerges in certain population segments. Nonwhites favor adoption of the system by a wide margin (54% to 33%). Similarly, those under 30, Catholics, persons residing in the inner cities, and those who are dissatisfied with the performance of the public schools (i.e., give them a D or Failing grade) support the adoption of the voucher system by about a 5-3 margin.

The question:

In some nations the government allots a certain amount of money for each child for his education. The parents can send the child to any public, parochial, or private school they choose. This is called the "voucher system." Would you like to see such an idea adopted in this country?

	National Totals %	No Children In School %	Public School Parents %	Nonpublic School Parents %
Yes	46	44	51	64
No	41	41	41	28
No opinion	13	15	8	8

NATIONAL TOTALS

	1986 %	1985 %	1983 %	1981 %	1971 %	1970 %
Yes	46	45	51	43	38	43
No	41	40	38	41	44	46
No opinion	13	15	11	16	18	11

Further breakdowns:

	Yes %	No %	Don't Know %
NATIONAL TOTALS	46	41	13
Sex			
Men	46	44	10
Women	46	38	16
Race			
White	45	42	13
Nonwhite	54	33	13
Age			
18 - 29 years	55	30	15
30 - 49 years	48	41	11
50 and over	37	49	14
Community Size			
1 million and over	48	36	16
500,000 - 999,999	50	33	17
50,000 - 499,999	53	39	8

	Yes %	No %	Don't Know %
Community Size			
2,500 - 49,999	41	53	6
Under 2,500	39	46	15
Central city	52	34	14
Education			
College	44	46	10
Graduate	43	46	11
Incomplete	44	47	9
High school	49	37	14
Graduate	50	36	14
Incomplete	48	37	15
Grade school	40	36	24
Income			
$40,000 and over	51	42	7
$30,000 - $39,999	43	47	10
$20,000 - $29,999	48	41	11
$10,000 - $19,999	47	37	16
Under $10,000	45	38	17
Region			
East	55	32	13
Midwest	42	46	12
South	43	40	17
West	46	44	10

How a $600 Voucher Would Be Used

If public school parents were given a $600 voucher that could be used to enroll their children in *any* school — public, private, or parochial — about one-quarter of them would use it for a parochial school (14%) or for a private school (13%). Six percent would use the voucher for another public school, but the majority, 61%, would keep their children in their present public schools.

These views are shared equally among various parent population groups, with one exception. Women appear to be about twice as likely as men to use a $600 voucher to send their oldest child to a *parochial* school (19% to 9%).

The question:

Suppose the federal government gave you a voucher worth $600, which you could use to enroll your oldest child in any school — public, private, or church-related. Would you use the voucher to enroll the child in another public school, in a private school, a church-related school, or would you keep the child in the same school?

Public School Parents	Other Public School %	Private School %	Church-Related School %	Keep Child In Same School %	Don't Know %
TOTAL	6	13	14	61	6
Sex					
Men	5	12	9	67	7
Women	7	14	19	55	5
Education					
College	5	10	16	63	6
High school	6	14	13	61	6
Occupation					
White collar	4	16	11	63	6
Blue collar	6	10	17	62	5
Oldest Child Attends					
High school	7	14	13	63	3
Elementary school	6	12	16	60	6
Oldest Child's Class Standing					
Above average	4	12	15	63	6
Average or below	9	15	14	60	2

Research Procedure

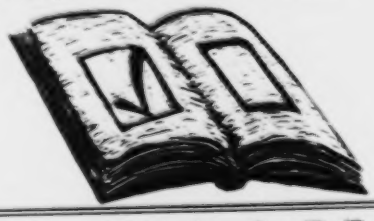
The Sample. The sample used in this survey embraced a total of 1,552 adults (18 years of age and older). It is described as a modified probability sample of the U.S. population. Personal, in-home interviewing was conducted in all areas of the nation and in all types of communities. A description of the sample and sample design is available from Phi Delta Kappa.

Time of Interviewing. The fieldwork for this study was carried out during the period of 11-20 April 1986.

The Report. The heading "Nonpublic School Parents" includes parents of students who attend parochial schools and parents of students who attend private or independent schools.

Due allowance must be made for statistical variation, especially in the case of findings for groups consisting of relatively few respondents, e.g., nonpublic school parents.

The findings of this report apply only to the U.S. as a whole and not to individual communities. Local surveys, using the same questions, can be conducted to determine how local areas compare with the national norm.



How to Order the Poll

Persons who wish to have a copy of the *complete* report of the 1986 Gallup/PDK education survey may secure one by writing to Phi Delta Kappa, enclosing $25 to cover all costs. The full report consists of 178 pages, with approximately three times as much information as could be included in this issue of the *Kappan*.

The minimum order for reprints of the published version of the Gallup Poll is 25 copies for $10. Additional copies are 25 cents each. This price includes postage for parcel post delivery. Where possible, enclose a check or money order.

If faster delivery is desired, do not include a remittance with your order. You will be billed at the above rates plus any additional cost involved in the method of delivery.

Phi Delta Kappa has published a 15-year (1969-1984) compilation of the Gallup polls on education. In this volume the poll questions are arranged topically rather than chronologically, making it easier to look up poll results on specific topics. *The Gallup Polls of Attitudes Toward Education, 1969-1984: A Topical Summary* can be ordered for $6 each ($5 for PDK members).

Orders for a copy of the complete report, for reprints, or for the book should be addressed to Gallup Poll, Phi Delta Kappa, P.O. Box 789, Bloomington, IN 47402-0789. Ph. 812/339-1156.